

NOTES ON SNAKES.

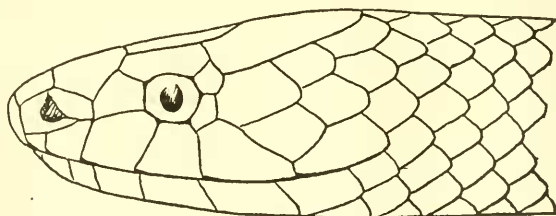
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THE first two snakes below mentioned were included in a small collection made by the Rev. W. G. Ivens in the Solomon Islands. As both differ somewhat from the descriptions of the respective species, opportunity is taken to point out their individual peculiarities. The third note deals with an Australian species whose habitat has been the subject of some uncertainty.

I.—DENISONIA MELANURA, *Boul.*

Hoplocephalus melanurus, Proc. Zool. 1888, p. 88, and 1890, p. 30, pl. ii., fig. 1.

Denisonia melanura, Brit. Mus. Cat. Snakes (2nd ed.) iii., 1896, p. 345.



The most noticeable difference between our specimen of *Denisonia melanura* and those previously described, is to be found in the circumstance that it possesses six upper labials instead of seven. The lost plate occurs between the fifth and the ultimate labials, but fails to reach the mouth, as shown in the accompanying figure. This is perhaps an individual peculiarity and worthy of notice only as such. The frontal, however, is considerably longer than in the British Museum specimens, being as long as the prefrontals and internasals combined, and two-thirds the length of the parietals. The tail is not black as described, but similar in color to the body, likewise crossed by dark bands.

Having but a single example, I hesitate to create a new species. Pending further material, it may for the present be known as:—

Denisonia melanura, var. *boulengeri*.

The scale formula is as follows: Scales in 15 rows, ventrals 170; anal divided; sub-caudals 43. Total length 850 mm.; tail 125 mm.

II.—MICROPECHIS ELAPOIDES, *Boul.*

Hoplocephalus elapoides, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1890, p. 30, pl. ii., fig. 3.
Micropechis elapoides, Brit. Mus. Cat. Snakes, (2nd ed.) iii., 1896,
 p. 347.



The only particular in which this specimen differs from the type is in the extent of its markings. Instead of the black bands being less than twice the width of the interspaces they are five or six times as wide. In Boulenger's figure the black bands are shown as wide at the sides as on the vertebral line. In our example they are so disposed that the cream ground colour appears as a series of inverted Vs when viewed laterally. The condition may be illustrated by supposing a number of flexible pennies were laid upon the back within an eighth of an inch of each other and then folded down the sides. The bands encircle the tail and the ventral scales are generally edged and clouded with black. The first black band commences close behind the parietals, which, together with the snout and ocular region are also black.

III.—FURINA CALONOTA, *Dum. & Bibr.*

Furina calonota, Erpét. Génér., 1854, vii., p. 1241, pl. lxxv. b.

The habitat of this species having always been in question, and even yet doubtful, it is with satisfaction that I am able to remove the uncertainty. The authors state that Verreaux sent two examples from Tasmania in 1844. After a quarter of a century a specimen was obtained by the British Museum, the locality being given as Baranquilla at the mouth of the River Magdalena in Columbia. Doubts were cast on this when *Brachyurophis* (*Rhynchelaps*) purchased as from the same locality, was discovered to be an Australian genus.

According to the British Museum Catalogue, the locality is doubtfully West Australia, as explained by the footnote* :—

“The specimen was purchased as from Baranquilla, Columbia, together with a specimen of the W. Australian *Rhynchelaps semifasciatus*.”

Quite recently we received, by presentation from Mr. Henry Richards, an interesting series of Reptiles from West Australia, including a small example of *Furina calonota*, the locality being rendered as Claremont, five miles from Perth.

* Brit. Mus. Cat. Snakes, (2nd ed.) iii., 1896, p. 407.